

12-18-2020

Methodising Scots: the Cases of Allan Ramsay & Thomas Ruddiman

Jeremy J. Smith
University of Glasgow

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl>



Part of the [Literature in English, British Isles Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Smith, Jeremy J. (2020) "Methodising Scots: the Cases of Allan Ramsay & Thomas Ruddiman," *Studies in Scottish Literature*: Vol. 46: Iss. 2, 127–147.

Available at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol46/iss2/9>

This Article is brought to you by the Scottish Literature Collections at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Studies in Scottish Literature* by an authorized editor of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact dillarda@mailbox.sc.edu.

METHODISING SCOTS: THE CASES OF ALLAN RAMSAY AND THOMAS RUDDIMAN¹

Jeremy J. Smith

1. On communities of practice

Current scholarship in historical textual studies increasingly emphasises how texts “enter into perpetual cycles of circulation.”² As I have flagged elsewhere, it has become generally accepted that authors, copyists (scribes, printers), editors and readers all participate in the construction of a given text’s meanings in the widest sense, expressed through a set of signs, some obviously linguistic (lexicon, grammar), and others sometimes marginalised by linguists, including not only spelling but also script or font, punctuation, and what is called *mise-en-page*.³ It is possible to analyse such features to demonstrate the correlation between textual form and textual function at important points of socio-cultural transition.

Such approaches are part of what, more broadly, has been called “the material turn in philology”:

a paradigm shift that highlights the importance of the material context of the book for historical linguistics and textual scholarship ... philologists are now increasingly seen to include non-textual or supra-textual features of the physical book (artefact) as contextual variables in their analyses ... In doing so, they are informed by research in codicology and palaeography to scrutinize the physical structure, handwriting, layout, decoration and provenance of manuscripts.⁴

¹ I am greatly indebted to Craig Lamont and Patrick Scott for crucial assistance with the Figures for this article, to Craig Lamont and Murray Pittock for comments, and to Robert Maclean and Ralph McLean for information about library-holdings.

² Sebastiaan Verweij, *The Literary Culture of Early Modern Scotland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 2.

³ Jeremy J. Smith, *Transforming Early English: the reinvention of Early English and Older Scots* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 9-13 and *passim*.

⁴ Michael Drout and Scott Kleinman, “Doing Philology 2: Something ‘Old’, Something ‘New’: material philology and the recovery of the past,” *The Heroic*

And Vincent Gillespie, from another disciplinary perspective, has referred to “total codicology”:

the evolution of palaeography into a highly detailed and finessed form of material and cultural history. No matter how abstract the ideas, the manuscripts and early printed books always have things to tell us, often in unexpected aspects of layout, *ordinatio* and metatext, as well as the more expected (and often exquisitely historically layered) signs of readerly response.⁵

As Tim Machan, in an important theoretical book on textual criticism, argued some years ago, “the pragmatics through which a work was articulated included highly expressive features of layout and design that manuscript producers could consciously manipulate”;⁶ and, as researchers associated with the “pragmatics on the page” movement have shown, Machan’s insights can be extended easily to the world of print.⁷ Pragmatic research typically deals with how language works in particular interactional situations, i.e. in conversations, in speeches, in letters, in computer-mediated communication etc.; the comparatively new discipline of historical pragmatics shows how the formal features of a (written) text from the past, features of “expressive form,” relate closely to contemporary socio-cultural processes, imperatives and functions.⁸

The following paper takes its orientation from such insights, focusing in particular on Allan Ramsay (1684-1758). As well as a poet in his own right, whose play *The Gentle Shepherd* (1725, 1729-) achieved widespread contemporary acclaim, Ramsay was a seminal editor of medieval Scottish verse. *The Ever Green* (1723-4), centred on an edition of the Bannatyne manuscript of sixteenth-century poetry, opened up the verses of Robert Henryson and William Dunbar to contemporaries. Ramsay’s regular printer, Thomas Ruddiman (1674-1757), was in addition not only the

Age, 13 (2010): online at: <http://www.heroicage.org/issues/13/pi.php> (accessed 20 July 2020), section 8; see also Merja Kytö and Matti Peikola, “Philology on the Move: manuscript studies at the dawn of the twenty-first century,” *Studia Neophilologica*, 86, special supplement (2014): 1-8.

⁵ Vincent Gillespie, “Research interests”: online at: <https://www.lmh.ox.ac.uk/our-academics/fellows/prof-vincent-gillespie> (accessed 20 July 2020).

⁶ Tim William Machan, *Textual Criticism and Middle English Texts* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994), 165.

⁷ E.g. Matti Peikola, Aleksi Makilahde, Hanna Salmi, Mari-Liisa Varila and Janne Skaffari, eds, *Verbal and Visual Communication in Early English Texts* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017).

⁸ Maureen Bell, “*Mise-en-page*, illustration, expressive form: introduction,” in John Barnard, Donald F. McKenzie and Maureen Bell, eds, *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain IV: 1557-1695* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 632-635 (632).

leading Latinist of his day but also a distinguished critical editor of Gavin Douglas's Older Scots translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* (1710). Both were members of the culture of conviviality and sociability that existed in Edinburgh's cramped Old Town at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and which can only be vaguely sensed by present-day visitors to the massive "lands" that line the city's Royal Mile from St Giles's cathedral to the castle. But in addition they were ideologically close, sympathisers with Jacobitism who saw their cultural endeavours as contributing to political change, and both men worked together on the production of texts that, to those who could understand the semiotic codes they deployed, spoke to a shared agenda. They formed, in sum, a *community of practice*:

an aggregate of people who come together in mutual engagement in an endeavor. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, power relations -- in short practices -- emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor. As a social construct, a community of practice is different from the traditional community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages.⁹

I return to the notion of "community of practice" later in this essay.

2. On "expressive form": *The Gentle Shepherd*

We are fortunate in Ramsay's case that we have not only published material but many of the autograph manuscripts of his texts that were later to appear in print. It is therefore possible to identify the workings of the community of practice involved in these texts' development, noting the particular formal choices made at various stages in the transmission of Ramsay's texts from script to print.

The first edition of Ramsay's *The Gentle Shepherd; A SCOTS Pastoral Comedy*, published in Edinburgh in 1725, is an excellent example of a "mutual ... endeavor" in action: "Printed by Mr THO. RUDDIMAN, for the AUTHOR, Sold at his Shop near the Cross." This printed text, however, was the culmination of a creative process that, by good fortune, we can track in detail, since not only does the original printers' copy survive, but also three earlier drafts of portions of the work: all manuscripts in the author's own hand.¹⁰ The first of these holographs, now National Library of Scotland

⁹ Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet, "Think practically and look locally: language and gender as community-based practice," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21 (1992): 461-490 (464); see further Smith, *Transforming Early English*, 30.

¹⁰ See John Goodridge, "*The Gentle Shepherd*," in Margaret M. Smith and Alexander Lindsay, with John Goodridge and Christine Alexander, *Index of English Literary Manuscripts III, Part 3* (London: Mansell, 1992), 251-2.

MS 15972, was presented in 1737 to Susanna, Countess of Eglinton, the literary patron, who in turn passed it to Alexander Boswell, Lord Auchinleck, James Boswell's father. The three drafts are all now bound together in Edinburgh, University Library, MS Laing II, 212* (folios 1r-35r, 36v-48r, and 50r-51r respectively, with the oldest draft now bound last, and the earliest first).

The processes involved in the revision and subsequent publication can be exemplified by the opening of Act II, Scene 1: a conversation between the two "old Shepherds," Glaud and Symon, that survives in all witnesses. Figure 1 is a reproduction of a short passage from the second draft (f. 38r); Figure 2 captures the same passage from the fair manuscript-copy; and Figure 3 reproduces the same passage in the 1725 edition.

As will be clear from Figures 1 and 2, there are clear substantive differences between the two manuscript copies. We might note the removal of the repetition of *Hab* in the first line; the substantial rephrasing of the third line; the replacement of *good Estate* by *fair Estate*; and a change of metaphorical frame in the sixth line, replacing *to rise or tumble* with the more grandiloquent *to shine, or set in Glory*, at the same time removing the frequentative morpheme *-le* clumsily echoing with *Rumple* (i.e. the Rump Parliament). By contrast, there are no substantive differences between Figures 2 and 3.

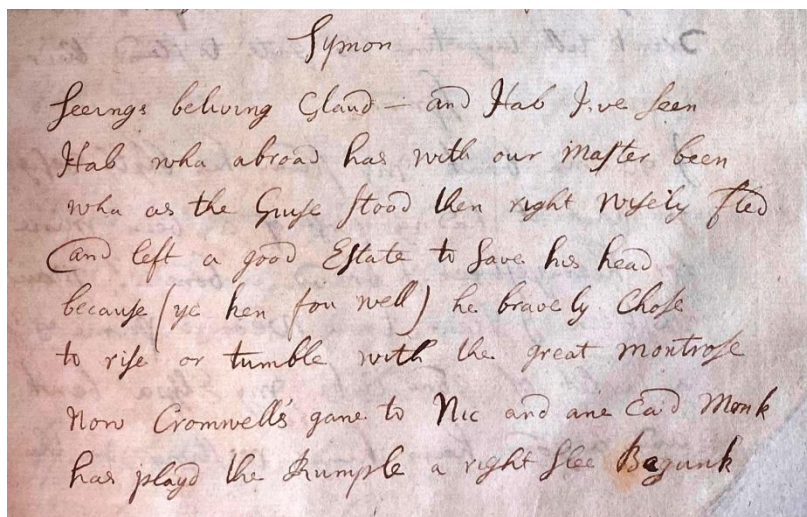


Fig. 1: from Ramsay's second draft of *The Gentle Shepherd*, Act II, Sc. 1 MS Laing II, 212*, f. 38r, by permission of Edinburgh University Library

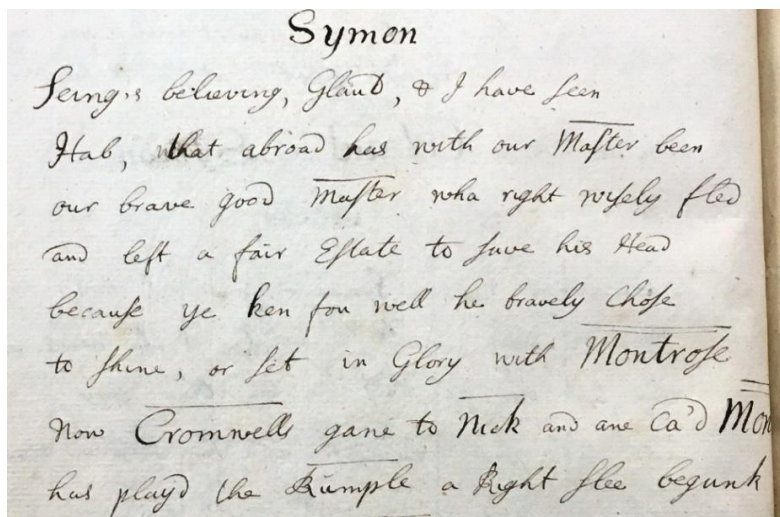


Fig. 2: from Ramsay's fair copy, *The Gentle Shepherd*, Act II, Sc. 1:
NLS MS 15972, f. 27v, by permission of the National Library of Scotland

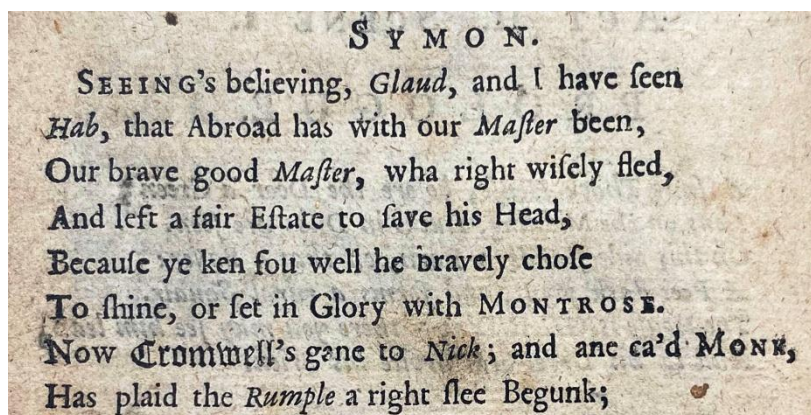


Fig. 3: from Allan Ramsay, *The Gentle Shepherd*
(Edinburgh: Ruddiman, 1725), 18; NLS F.7.f.22,
by permission of the National Library of Scotland

As will be clear from Figures 1 and 2, there are clear substantive differences between the two manuscript copies. We might note the removal of the repetition of *Hab* in the first line; the substantial rephrasing of the third line; the replacement of *good Estate* by *fair Estate*; and a change of metaphorical frame in the sixth line, replacing *to rise or tumble* with the more grandiloquent *to shine, or set in Glory*, at the same time removing the

frequentative morpheme *-le* clumsily echoing with *Rumple* (i.e. the Rump Parliament). By contrast, there are no substantive differences between Figures 2 and 3.

However, there are also some subtler changes between these three versions, of the kind frequently dismissed by editors as “accidentals.” In the draft, punctuation is restricted to the occasional deployment of capitals, and to the use of an em-rule or dash, a pair of brackets, and a sole example of an “apologetic” or antiquarian apostrophe in *ca’d* “called” (reflecting in script the operation of the Older Scots sound-change known as *l*-vocalisation); it is interesting that the form *fou* “full” is not so distinguished. The fair copy offers a slightly developed palette of usage, with in-line (though not line-final) commas, a variety of what paleographers refer to as *litterae notabiliores* including engrossed forms of the names *Montrose* and *Monk*, and superscript rulings over *Master* (referring to the character Sir William Worthy) and selected proper names (doubled over *Montrose* and *Monk*). That these superscript lines were intended to be directive for the printer is demonstrated by the corresponding use of larger and smaller capitals for *MONTROSE* and *MONK* in Figure 3, and by italicised *Master*, *Nick* (i.e. the devil, “Old Nick”).¹¹ However, the 1725 edition extends further the range of devices adopted, with extra commas and semi-colons (including at the ends of verse-lines), extra *litterae notabiliores* both line-initially and elsewhere (*Abroad*, *Begunk* “trick”—the latter a reversion to the usage of the draft), more extensive use of italics for all proper names (e.g. *Hab*, *Glaud*), and “gothic” blackletter for *Cromwell*.

Italicisation of proper names had been a commonplace in the printing of plays since at least the First Folio of Shakespeare (1623), and from there was extended to the printing of other genres, notably novels; it is therefore no surprise to find either Ramsay or Ruddiman making such a choice for the names in this play. However, the blackletter typeface adopted for *Cromwell* indicates that a more subtle typographical sensitivity was a feature of the printing history of *The Gentle Shepherd*. Later in the 1725 edition, blackletter was used for Sir William Worthy’s prophetic riddle, spoken by the character when in a supposed trance as a “spaeman,” and clearly there channelling the custom of using the typeface as an antiquarian evocation of the medieval vernacular.¹² Ruddiman had already used blackletter in the glossary to his edition of Gavin Douglas’s *Eneados*

¹¹ The humorous usage for the devil, “(Old) Nick,” seems to date from the middle of the seventeenth century; OED’s earliest entry is from around 1643, in which the name is interestingly linked to “Roundheads.” The traditional explanation of the name, linking it to Niccolò Machiavelli, seems no longer to be accepted.

¹² Allan Ramsay, *The Gentle Shepherd* (Edinburgh: Ruddiman, 1725), 41–42: III.2.

(1710), to flag Germanic (including Old and Middle English) cognates.¹³ The usage may also relate to the magical sub-theme in the play flagged elsewhere by the character of the supposed witch Mause; blackletter's deployment for *Cromwell* in II.1 might seem to suggest the "otherness" (and thus demonic character) of the Lord Protector, by contrast with the roman capitals used for figures associated with the "glorious" Stuart succession and restoration (Montrose, Monk). It is interesting that this latter contrast is further emphasised in later Ruddiman editions, e.g. in his 1734 and 1737 prints, in which blackletter is used not only for *Cromwell* but also for *Rumple* and *Nick*. It seems likely that the deployment and subsequent extension of blackletter was approved of by Ramsay, who sold both later editions, like the first, at his "Shop near the Cross." Such visual features, which would not of course have been salient to those witnessing a stage-performance, remind us that the early editions of *The Gentle Shepherd* were designed as much for visual perusal, in novelistic manner, as for performance.

Even more subtly, the evolution of punctuation between draft and edition shows how Ruddiman contributed to the pragmatics of the text as it was publicly presented. In what remains the standard work on the subject, Malcolm Parkes stated that the primary purpose of punctuation "is to resolve structural uncertainties in a text, and to signal nuances of semantic significance which might otherwise not be conveyed at all, or would at best be much more difficult for a reader to figure out";¹⁴ however, the structure of a given text can be conceived of in different ways. Present-day English "correct" punctuation is essentially *grammatical*, based on the analysis of grammatical structure and designed to help readers: a kind of parsing. Commas are used to mark lists, parenthetical statements, and apposed qualifiers, and to separate subordinate from main clauses. Semi-colons are deployed as an alternative to coordinating conjunctions, to link main clauses equiparatively, and colons (rather sparingly) to introduce lists. However, there is a parallel *rhetorical* use of punctuation that still exists, in which written text is more closely related to spoken performance or interpretation. Throughout its history punctuation has always had a rhetorical function, related to the needs of those reading aloud.¹⁵

¹³ *Virgil's Aeneis, Translated into Scottish Verse, by the Famous Gawin Douglas Bishop of Dunkeld* (Edinburgh: Symson and Freebairn, 1710). For Ruddiman's carer, see Douglas Duncan, *Thomas Ruddiman* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1965).

¹⁴ Parkes, *Pause and Effect*, 1.

¹⁵ Vestiges of this practice survive in present-day early-years teaching: a comma is inserted "when you breathe". And modern psychological research has demonstrated that even practised modern "silent" readers are, in Elspeth Jajdelska's handy

Ramsay's usage in his draft and fair-copy seems to be not only light by modern standards but primarily rhetorical, with a few additions where extra marks are deployed when there are potential "structural uncertainties" that the poet wishes to resolve. The dash, used in the draft, seems to have emerged first in plays, to represent "hesitations and sudden changes in the direction of thought associated with spoken discourse," while parentheses, also used in the draft, had a similar function;¹⁶ as Ruddiman himself explains, in another work that we will encounter shortly, parentheses were to be deployed when "a Sentence is thrown in that hath little or no Connection with the rest."¹⁷ In the fair copy the dash is removed, while paired commas frame *Glaud*, and the first two lines are rephrased to remove the clumsy repetition of *Hab*. Ramsay also removes the parentheses, allowing *he bravely Chose ...* to be reinterpreted as a subordinate clause functioning as the object of *ye ken fou well*: arguably a less effective usage than in the draft, since the passage therefore becomes more conventional in expression with the "Connection" made explicit, and the interaction between Glaud and Symon thus less conversational. The two remaining mid-line commas in the fair copy are deployed it seems to flag enjambment; lines where enjambment is not in question often begin, it may be observed, with conjunctions such as *and* and *because*, or supply the predicate for a preceding extended subject (e.g. *has playd ... begunk*).

Where the Ruddiman editions reflected the fair copy most closely is in the reproduction of Ramsay's Scots, even sustaining the use/absence of the

phrase, listening to "imagined speakers" in their heads (Jajdelska, *Silent Reading and the Birth of the Narrator*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007, *passim*).

¹⁶ Parkes, *Pause and Effect*, 93. The em-rule was transferred from plays to influential novels, such as Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1749) or Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749-50), no doubt in these cases encouraged by the former's experience as a master-printer tasked with the production of play-texts, and by the latter's experience as a dramatist. See Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa. Or, The History of a Young Lady* (London: Millar, 1749), and Henry Fielding, *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling* (London: Millar, 1749-50). It also became commonly deployed in other "speech-like" texts; see e.g. Jeremy J. Smith, "The pragmatics of punctuation in the letters of Robert Burns," in Gerard Carruthers, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Robert Burns* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming), and Jane Stabler, "The dashes in Manfred," in Omar Miranda, ed., *On the 200th Anniversary of Lord Byron's Manfred (Romantic Circles Praxis)*, <https://romantic-circles.org/praxis/manfred/praxis.2019.manfred.stabler.html> (online publication 2019, accessed 20 July 2020). Malcolm Parkes supplies useful illustrations of the practice in plays and other genres, noting how the "effect of verisimilitude ... is heightened by the use of dashes" (*Pause and Effect*, 224-229, and references there cited).

¹⁷ Thomas Ruddiman, *The Rudiments of the Latin Tongue, or A plain and easy Introduction to Latin Grammar* (Edinburgh: Freebairn, 1714), 104.

apostrophe in *ca'd/fou*, where the later Dundee edition of 1798 offers *ca'd* and *fu'* respectively, and even—a hyperadapted form—introduces *wi'* in place of *with*; the form *wi'* appears earlier in the 1725 edition, but is not consistently deployed.¹⁸ David Selfe has shown that the apostrophe in such words seems to have started to appear as a distinctive feature of printed Scots at the beginning of the eighteenth century in, for example, later editions of James Watson's influential *Choice Collection*, increasingly from the second edition of 1713 onwards, and was there especially common in some texts deemed by Watson to be historical rather than contemporary; for that reason, Selfe argues that the apostrophe should be seen, at least in origins, as “antiquarian” rather than “apologetic.”¹⁹

Otherwise, by contrast with the manuscripts, the punctuation of the 1725 edition is much more insistent, and in this context it is worth probing its origins. Ruddiman was of course, as well as a publisher/printer, one of the most prominent Latinists of his age, as witnessed by his *Rudiments of the Latin Tongue*, which went through fifteen editions in his lifetime alone. Ruddiman's *Rudiments* included a section called “Of Sentences, or Speech,” in which he defined the sentence as follows: “A SENTENCE is a Thought of the Mind, exprest by two or more Words put together.”²⁰ He went on to describe “the Unfolding of a Sentence,” distinguishing “Simple” from “Compound” sentences: “A SIMPLE Sentence is that which one Finite Verb in it,” whereas “A COMPOUND Sentence is that which hath two or more such Verbs.”²¹ At the end of the section, Ruddiman then links his discussion to punctuation:

the *Parts* of a *Compound Sentence* are separated from one another by these *Marks*, called INTERPUNCTIONS. 1. These that are *Smaller*, named *Clauses*, by this Mark (,) called a *Comma*. 2. These that are *greater*, named *Members*, by this (:) called a *Colon*, or this (;) called a *Semicolon*. 3. When a *Sentence* is thrown in that hath little or no Connection with the rest, it is included within what we call a *Parenthesis*, marked thus, ()

¹⁸ Allan Ramsay, *The Gentle Shepherd* (Dundee: Colvill and Donaldson, 1798), 15; and, e.g. Allan Ramsay, *The Gentle Shepherd* (Edinburgh: Ruddiman, 1725), 6.

¹⁹ James Watson, *Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems* (Edinburgh: Watson, 1713); David Selfe, *An Apostrophe to Scots* (PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, forthcoming). Like Ramsay, Watson was a vigorous Jacobite and opposer of the Union, who had been in trouble with the Edinburgh burgh council in 1694 as “a printer and profest papist”; see Jeremy J. Smith, *Older Scots: A Linguistic Reader* (Woodbridge: Scottish Text Society, 2012), 183 and references there cited.

²⁰ Ruddiman, *Rudiments*, 74.

²¹ Ruddiman, *Rudiments*, 103.

But when the *Sentence*, whether *Simple* or *Compound*, is fully ended, if it is a plain *Affirmation* or *Negation*, it is closed with this Mark (.) called a *Point*. If a *Question* is asked, with this Mark (?) called a *Point of Interrogation*. If *Wonder* or some other sudden *Passion* is signified, with this Mark (!) called a *Point of Admiration*.²²

Analysis of the passage in Figure 3 shows that the printer's practice is broadly in line with the practice set out in the *Rudiments*, making a distinction between "greater" and "smaller" clauses. Thus those clauses introduced by the conjunctions/relative pronouns *that*, *wha*, *Because*, or are preceded by commas, presumably because deemed "smaller." However, we might note the last two lines in the passage, and the lines that immediately follow in Symon's speech, viz.

Now *Cromwell's* gane to *Nick*; and ane ca'd MONK,
Has plaid the *Rumple* a right slee Begunk;
Restor'd King CHARLES, and ilka Thing's in tune;
And *Habby* says, we'll see Sir WILLIAM soon.

These lines present some parsing challenges if the punctuation of the printed text is retained by modern editors. It is interesting that later eighteenth-century editions of *The Gentle Shepherd* often addressed this issue by adopting distinct patterns of punctuation, more in accord with present-day expectations. Thus, for instance, the equivalent lines in the Dundee edition of 1798 read as follows:

Now *Cromwell's* gane to *Nick*; and ane ca'd Monk
Has play'd the *Rumple* a right slee begunk,
Restor'd King Charles; and ilka things in tune;
And *Habby* says, we'll see Sir William soon.²³

And the 1734 Ruddiman edition similarly replaces the earlier usage, reading as follows (with *Cromwell*, *Nick* and *Rumple* in blackletter):

Now *Cromwell's* gane to *Nick*; and ane ca'd MONK
Has play'd the *Rumple* a right slee Begunk,
Restor'd King CHARLES; and ilka Thing's in tune;
And *Habby* says, we'll see Sir William soon.²⁴

By contrast, in the 1725 edition the complex noun phrase *ane ca'd MONK* seems to be the subject governing both *Has plaid* and *Restor'd*, yet the comma and semi-colon interposed before the two verb phrases would not seem to reflect the presence of either "Clause" or "Member" in Ruddiman's terminology. Rather they would seem to represent a more rhetorical approach to punctuation, in which the two marks flagged pauses

²² Ruddiman, *Rudiments*, 104

²³ *The Gentle Shepherd* (1798), 16.

²⁴ *The Gentle Shepherd* (1734), 21.

of lesser or greater length, deployed presumably to flag silent stress after the units immediately preceding them.²⁵ The same approach would seem to underpin the use of a semi-colon after “*Nick*,” which corresponds to the caesura in the verse-line.

Such a blend of grammatical and rhetorical approaches to punctuation was recommended by Bishop Robert Lowth later in the century, in his highly influential *A Short Introduction to English Grammar* of 1762.²⁶ Like Ruddiman, Lowth demonstrates his awareness that, in antiquity, the terms *periodus*, *colon* and *comma* referred not to the marks of punctuation but to “Sentences” and their “principal constructive parts.”²⁷ However, Lowth is also aware that the marks as used in his own time have a rhetorical function:

The Period is a pause in quantity or duration double of the Colon; the Colon is double of the Semicolon; and the Semicolon is double of the Comma. So that they are in the same proportion to one another as the Sem-brief, the Minim, the Crotchet, and the Quaver, in Music.²⁸

The Ruddiman edition of 1725, therefore, is in eighteenth-century terms a sophisticated presentation of Ramsay’s text, up-to-date in its deployment of formal features designed to assist contemporary readers in their apprehension of the play. Malcolm Parkes has alerted us to the importance of such issues:

Punctuation is not a matter of “accidentals” but a form of hermeneutics ... part of the pragmatics of written language, in that it exacts from readers a contribution from their own ranges of experience to assess the broader significances of various kinds of literary, linguistic and semantic structures embodied in the text.²⁹

²⁵ Such usages persist in some present-day practice, especially when dealing with unfamiliar or archaic syntactic structures. An example is the use of the semi-colon by the editors of the *Riverside Chaucer*, deployed “inaccurately” to distinguish a subordinate from a main clause within a lengthy (and “unmodern”) Middle English sentence at the beginning of the *Canterbury Tales*. This particular example is actually a usage inherited from Thomas Tyrwhitt’s edition of 1775: see Larry Benson, gen. ed., *The Riverside Chaucer* (London: Oxford University Press, 1987), and Smith, *Transforming Early English*, 152.

²⁶ Robert Lowth, *A Short Introduction to English Grammar* (London: Millar and Dodsley, 1762).

²⁷ Lowth, *Short Introduction*, 156-7; for a discussion of the origins and development of the terminology, see Thomas Habinek, *The Colometry of Latin Prose* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

²⁸ Lowth, *Short Introduction*, 158.

²⁹ Malcolm B. Parkes, “Medieval punctuation and the modern editor,” in Anna Ferrari, ed., *Filologia classica e filologia romanza* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull’ alto Medioevo, 1999), 337-349 (338).

To punctuation may be added other “expressive” features such as typeface. It seems clear, from a comparison of his manuscripts and the first edition of the play, that Ramsay felt able to leave many such “hermeneutic” devices to Ruddiman, and in so doing he offers a challenge to the traditional goal of textual editors, the reconstruction of the author’s original conception of the work.³⁰ The text of *The Gentle Shepherd* as it survives in the 1725 edition would seem to be the outcome of a creative partnership between author and printer, both forming an identifiable community of practice.

3. Methodising Scots: *The Ever Green*

Ramsay’s close relationship with his printer was already apparent in a work which appeared just before *The Gentle Shepherd*, viz. *The Ever Green*, published by Ruddiman in two volumes in 1723-4, with an effusive dedication to James, Duke of Hamilton.³¹ Again, Ramsay’s manuscript version survives, as London, British Library MS Egerton 2024; and Ramsay goes out of his way to flag Ruddiman’s role by providing in the Egerton manuscript (folio 1r) a mock-up version of the title page, distinguished by a hierarchy of script-size to represent the equivalent in typeface, careful underlining, a motto from Pope’s *Essay on Criticism*, and even the placing of statements such “Published by Allan Ramsay, Edinburgh,” and “Printed by Mr Tho. Ruddiman for the Publisher at his Shop near the Cross.” As with *The Gentle Shepherd*, the transmission of the text to readers was to be controlled from composition to the point of sale by the community of practice from which it derived.

The Egerton manuscript was itself in large part a transcription of an earlier book, “Wrote,” Ramsay flags in his title, “by the Ingenious before 1600,” that is, the well-known Bannatyne manuscript, now National Library of Scotland MS. Advocates’ 1.1.6. The Bannatyne manuscript is

³⁰ See Smith, *Transforming Early English*, chapter 6 and references there cited.

³¹ Allan Ramsay, *The Ever Green, being a collection of Scots Poems, Wrote by the Ingenious before 1600* (Edinburgh: Ruddiman, 1723-4). Hamilton, the fifth duke, had succeeded his “extravagant and profligate” father when the latter died in a duel in 1712. More serious in temperament than his father, and now best known for his association with the London Foundling Hospital, Hamilton nevertheless seems to have shared many of his father’s political views; Edinburgh’s Royal Company of Archers, of which he was Captain General, was “a nest of closet Jacobites” (Murray Pittock, “Ramsay, Allan (1684-1758), poet,” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*: www.oxforddnb.com, published 23 September 2004, last accessed 20 July 2020). Ramsay composed a poem in praise of the Company (“On the Royal Archers Shooting for the Bowl”), which survives in another holograph manuscript: National Library of Scotland, MS 2233, f. 41v.

usually dated to 1568, but it may have been written a little earlier, perhaps relating to the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots to Henry Lord Darnley.³² It is arguably the most important surviving witness for Older Scots poetry, containing verse by, *inter alia*, such major authors as William Dunbar and Robert Henryson.

Ramsay's *The Ever Green* remains foundational for the creation of a distinctive Scottish literary tradition stretching back into the late medieval period, but it was not alone; Ruddiman also has a claim to be the first major contributor to the formation of an Older Scots canon, with his edition of Gavin Douglas's *Eneados*.³³ But these two publications have very different goals, presumably designed for distinct readerships: learned in the case of Ruddiman's, more general in the case of Ramsay's. One notable difference between the two approaches is flagged by the contrast in the paratextual acknowledgements. Ramsay simply acknowledged the assistance of William Carmichael in enabling his access to the Bannatyne manuscript. By contrast, Ruddiman emphasised his academic credentials with references to standard learned authorities, including John Ray, Gilles Menage, "[Franciscus] Junius's Glossarium Gothicum," Gerardus Vossius, Charles "Du Fresne" (better known now as Charles du Cange), Henry Spelman, and two works on specifically English philology: George Hickes's *Linguarum Veterum Septentrionalium Thesaurus Grammatico-Criticus et Archaeologicus*, and Stephen Skinner's posthumously published *Etymologicon Linguae Anglicanae*.³⁴ Another difference is that Ruddiman emphasised how his edition depended for its authority on the collation of William Copland's London edition (1553) with the mid-sixteenth century Ruthven manuscript (now Edinburgh University Library, MS Dc 1.43).³⁵ Ramsay makes no claim to such learning in *The Ever Green*.

The two editions thus explicitly represented distinct conceptions of editorial goals. As I have discussed in detail elsewhere, Ruddiman was a scholar, transferring up-to-date techniques of classical textual criticism,

³² See Alasdair MacDonald, "The Bannatyne Manuscript: A Marian Anthology," *Innes Review*, 37 (1986): 36–47.

³³ Thomas Ruddiman, ed., *Virgil's Aeneis, Translated into Scottish Verse, by the Famous Gawin Douglas Bishop of Dunkeld* (Edinburgh: Symson and Freebairn, 1710).

³⁴ George Hickes, *Linguarum Veterum Septentrionalium Thesaurus Grammatico-Criticus et Archaeologicus* (Oxonii: e Theatro Sheldoniano, 1705), generally referred to as "Hickes's *Thesaurus*"; Stephen Skinner, *Etymologicon Linguae Anglicanae* (London: Roycroft and Brome, 1671).

³⁵ Gavin Douglas, *The xiii Bukes of Eneados of the famos Poete Virgill Translatet out of Latyne verses into Scottish metir, bi the Reuerend fathir in God, Mayster Gawin Douglas Bishop of Dunkel & vnkil to the Erle of Angus* (London: Copland, 1553).

which in the eighteenth century were making formidable advances, to the editing of vernacular texts, whereas Ramsay's practice pointed forward to a different, creative, response to past literary texts, comparable in some respects to the approach adopted by Thomas Percy in his *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* (1765).³⁶ One obvious parallel between Percy's *Reliques* and *The Ever Green* is the addition in the latter of later texts deemed culturally salient, including the notorious pastiche-poem *Hardyknute*, by Lady Elizabeth Wardlaw (1677-1727); *Hardyknute* was to reappear in Percy's collection. However, both Ramsay's and Ruddiman's collections were accompanied by glossaries, and some discussion of the Scots language; and here there are some intriguing similarities, demonstrating how the two works shared common cultural assumptions: a connexion suggested, of course, by Ramsay's adoption of "Gavin Douglas" as his Easy Club pseudonym.

Ruddiman's glossary is prefaced by a long introduction: "General Rules for *Understanding the Language of Bishop Dowglas's Translation of Virgil's Æneis*." The first paragraph from these Rules is worth quoting:

It is be observed in the first place, That throughout the whole, the way of spelling is very far from being uniform; Which was the general fault of those and former times, especially among them who wrote in the *Saxon*, old *Scots*, and *English* Dialects: An imperfection which too much attends all living Languages; notwithstanding all the attempts of learned men to rectify it.³⁷

Ruddiman nevertheless then attempted to outline a series of spelling-practices that he regarded as prototypical of Scots usage; and this description underpins an abbreviated version offered by Ramsay in a comparable set of Notes in *The Ever Green*, which, following Ruddiman, he calls "general Rules." Ramsay makes the connexion explicit in his discussion of one set of forms:

³⁶ See Smith, *Transforming Early English*, especially chapter 5, and Jeremy J. Smith, "Recuperating Older Scots in the eighteenth century," in Matti Peikola and Birte Bös, eds, *The Dynamics of Text and Framing Phenomena in the History of English* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, forthcoming); Thomas Percy, ed., *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London: Dodsley, 1765). Perhaps the best-known example of the Ruddiman approach to editing is Richard Bentley (1662-1742), whose career is fully described in Leighton Reynolds and Nigel G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: a guide to the transmission of Greek and Latin literature*, third edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). For Bentley's wider cultural significance, see Smith, *Transforming Early English*, chapter 6 and references there cited.

³⁷ Ruddiman, *Virgil's Æneis*, §I.

Qwhyle, Quhat, Quho, Quyht, &c. While, What, Who, White. The *qu* is always us'd for the German *w*, when an *h* immediately follows. See Mr. Ruddiman's Glossary to Gavin Douglas's Virgil.³⁸

Ruddiman's discussion offers a cross-reference to his Glossary ('V[ide] *Q*')

Q. In all Languages wherein it is now used, hath always an *V* after it. Our Author and the whole train of our old Scottish Writers alwayes use this *Qu* for the German *W*, when an *H* immediately follows: And this custom (which is not yet quite worn out, especially in our Forms or Stiles of Writs,) is so peculiar to Scotland, that I find little or nothing of it in any old Engl. Author.³⁹

Again, we are in the fortunate position of being able to compare Ramsay's manuscript with the eventually printed edition, but here an extra comparison is possible, with the Older Scots original. Figures 4-6 present three texts of *A Ballat made to the Scorn and derision of Wanton Women*, from respectively the Bannatyne and Egerton manuscripts, and from the 1723-4 edition.

Several points of interest may be noted from a comparison of these three versions. First, it is clear that Ramsay is still feeling his way in his transcription of the Older Scots original, replacing his original English forms *what*, *litle* <sic>, *beastly*, *seduced*, *she*, *shall* etc with the Scots forms *quhat*, *lytill*, *beistly*, *sedusit*, *scho*, *sall*, etc., although he leaves uncorrected—perhaps because less lexically salient—Anglicised forms such as *again* (cf. Bannatyne *agane*).⁴⁰ Other uncorrected forms such as *sic* “such,” *luve*, *nowther*, *frae*, *tak*, etc., would seem to be more securely part of his Scots repertoire. But conversely it may be noted that Ramsay's Scots forms such as *tak*, *frae* are not actually transcriptions of the Bannatyne manuscript, which reads *take*, *ffra/fra* respectively. Such practices abound in Ramsay's transcription. For instance, in his version of William Dunbar's

³⁸ Ramsay, *The Ever Green*, 4.

³⁹ Ruddiman, *Virgil's Aeneis*, §XXXV. Ruddiman then goes on to describe the characteristic “Doric” reflex of Old English *hw-* as labio-dental fricative /f/, and offers some speculation as to this form's origins, albeit eventually leaving the matter to “Criticks in Philology.” Interestingly, Ramsay and Ruddiman did not adopt the <quh-> spelling in *The Gentle Shepherd*; we might note the form *wha* “who” in Symon's speech quoted above.

⁴⁰ It is interesting, in the light of Ruddiman's comments about the use of the <quh-> spelling in contemporary Scots legal practice cited above, that the <u> in *quhat* is marked by the lawyers' tittle-mark, widely used until at least the early nineteenth century to disambiguate <u> and <n>. I am indebted to Joanna Kopaczky, who drew my attention to the legal use of the tittle-mark, and to Alison Lumsden, who informs me that the usage is common in Walter Scott's (legally-trained) handwriting.

Discretioun in Taking, Ramsay regularly replaces Bannatyne's *diuill* "devil" with *Deil*, a hyper-correction in the direction of a perceived more "authentic" Scotticism later sanctioned by its appearance in Robert Burns's *Address to the Deil*; v-deletion, i.e. the dropping of [v] with compensatory lengthening of the vowel, is increasingly common in Scots after c.1450, but the sound-change was not reflected in Bannatyne's spellings. It seems in sum that Ramsay has a particular conception of Scots that trumps the usage of his exemplar.⁴¹

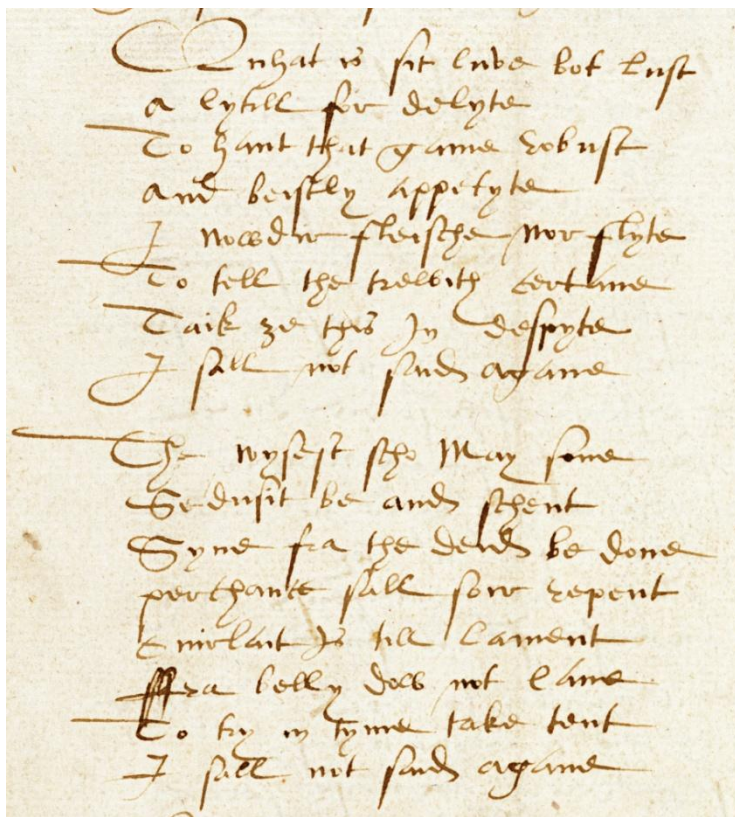


Figure 4: From George Bannatyne's copy of Alexander Scott (c.1520-1582/3), *A Ballat made to the Scorn and Derision of Wanton Women* MS Advocates' 1.1.6, the Bannatyne manuscript, folio 128v by permission of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh

⁴¹ For further discussion of such hypercorrection, see Smith, *Transforming Early English*, 201-2.

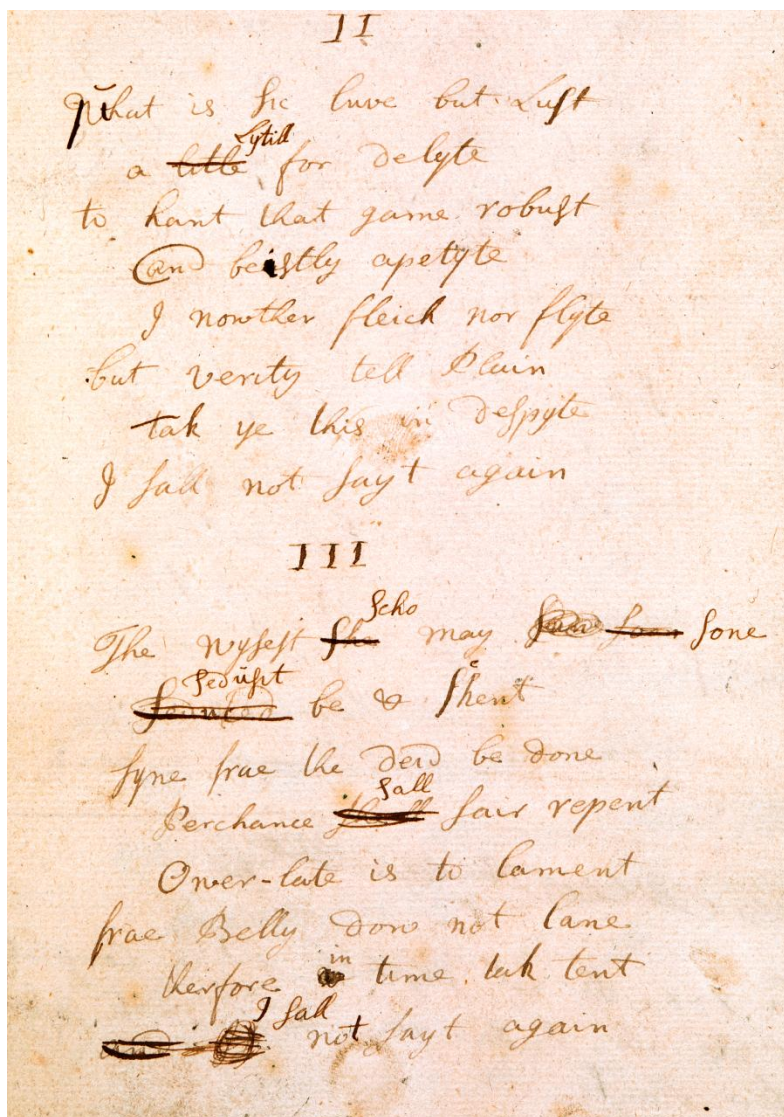


Figure 5: Allan Ramsay's transcription, with corrections, of the Bannatyne version of *A Ballat ...*: MS Egerton 2024, folio 153r
 © and with the permission of the British Library Board

II.
 QUHAT is sic Luvè but Lust,
 A lytill for Delyte,
 To hant that Game robust,
 And beistly Apetyte;

I nowther fleich nor flyte,
 But Veritie tell plain;
 Tak ye this in Despyte,
 I fall not sayt again.

III.
 THE wysest Scho may sone
 Seducit be and schent,
 Syne frae the Deid be done,
 Perchance fall fair repent;
 Ower late is to lament,
 Frae Belly dow not lane,
 Therfor in Tyme tak tent :
 I fall not sayt again.

Fig. 6: from Allan Ramsay, "A BALLAT made to the Scorn and Derision of wanton Women," *The Ever Green* (Edinburgh: Ruddiman, 1723-4), I: 123-124
 Image from copy owned by Dr. Mary Jane Scott

Comparison of the Egerton manuscript with the printed edition shows—as we might expect from the earlier discussion of *The Gentle Shepherd*—yet further intervention, in the introduction of punctuation and *litterae notabiliores*. Punctuation is deployed in line with Ruddiman’s preferred practice, with commas and semi-colons generally positioned at line-ends. The only exception, the first two lines in Stanza III, reflect the dependence, and thus enjambment, of the participles *Seducit* and *schent* on the auxiliary verbs *may ... be* (the “split heavy group” *Seducit be and schent* is a characteristic Older Scots structure inherited from Old English). Mid-line capitalisation is, in line with evolving eighteenth-century polite practice, largely restricted to nouns which are prototypically emphasised in discourse, the only exception being *Scho*, which is clearly capitalised to emphasise the pronoun’s properties as having an implicit rather than explicit referent.⁴²

As a community of practice, Ramsay and Ruddiman have, then, both had distinctive inputs to the final printed output, and it is worth pondering on what that final product, as transformed from the Older Scots original via Ramsay’s transcription to Ruddiman’s edition, would have signified to contemporaries. A hint is offered, perhaps, in the first paragraph in Ruddiman’s “General Rules” in his edition of Douglas, when he referred to “the attempts of learned men to rectify” the “faults” of texts inherited from the past. In *The Ever Green*, an attempt has been made, in line with contemporary ideologies, to present the Scots language inherited from the past in an ordered form. Ramsay and Ruddiman were, it seems, going beyond antiquarian recuperation to develop something new, transformed for the tastes of contemporaries: an invented, methodized Scots.

4. Inventing and methodizing

Inventing and methodizing were of course much in the air at the beginning of the eighteenth century. As the citations from the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) show, “invention” could by this date be as much about the discovery of new things as—in accordance with classical and medieval notions of *inventio*—the recuperation of the old, while methodizing—“To reduce to method or order; to arrange (thoughts, ideas, expression, etc.) in an orderly or systematic manner,” as the OED puts it—was at the heart of

⁴² Contemporary letter-writing manuals are useful reference-points in this regard. See for instance the anonymously-authored *The Compleat Letter Writer*, one of the most widely-circulated manuals of this kind: “’Tis esteemed ornamental to begin every Substantive in the Sentence with a Capital, if it bears some considerable Stress of the Author’s Sense upon it, to make it the more remarkable and conspicuous.” [Anon], *The Compleat Letter Writer*, third edition (London: Crowder and Woodgate, 1756), 60.

Enlightenment thought.⁴³ “Forging the nation” could thus mean not only, as in Linda Colley’s formulation, the creation of the new centralised state of Great Britain, but also the imagining of a new, distinctive Scotland; it is worth recalling the view now commonly held by scholars that Jacobitism, the ideology shared by both Ramsay and Ruddiman, represented not so much a traditionalist *cri de coeur* but rather a distinct (and Scottish) approach to “modernity.”⁴⁴ The Scots of the Bannatyne manuscript was, as we have seen, to be presented and arranged “in an orderly and systematic manner,” making it suitable for the emerging cultural elites for whom Ramsay and Ruddiman catered: not just the Countess of Eglintoun or the Duke of Hamilton, the original dedicatees of *The Gentle Shepherd* and *The Ever Green* respectively, but also those readers who consumed these texts so avidly during the course of the eighteenth century. Jacobitism might have “failed” as a political project, but the cultural traction of Ramsay’s works, in Murray Pittock’s words, “remains both historic and underestimated.”⁴⁵ That these larger cultural patterns are reflected in the delicate textual details discussed in this article is not surprising. As Angus McIntosh pointed out some time ago, understanding the relationship between “English” (or “Scots”) “in a purely linguistic sense and the environment and social and other conditions that pertained at the time when particular forms of that language were used” is crucial for interpreting the codes through which past cultures were expressed.⁴⁶

More narrowly (in a sense), the editorial practices of Ramsay and Ruddiman have been shown to point forward to the kind of issues that have

⁴³ On *inventio*, see, e.g., James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 11, and references there cited. All references to the OED are taken from www.oed.com, accessed 20th July 2020. Relevant citations from OED include “1665 R. HOOKE *Micrographia* Pref. sig. B2^v There may be yet invented several other helps for the eye” (beside “1691 J. RAY *Wisdom of God* 202 Nature hath provided ... four Channels to convey it into the Mouth, which are of late invention and called by Anatomists *Ductus Salivales*”), and “1713 G. BERKELEY in *Guardian* 25 Apr. 2/1 He should be taught ... to order and methodize his Ideas.” “Methodism,” the ordered approach to Christian living that emerged in the eighteenth century, derived from this latter usage, and was originally a term of mockery: see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2009), 749.

⁴⁴ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); Paul Monod, “A Restoration? 25 years of Jacobite studies,” *Literature Compass*, 10 (2013): 311-330, and references there cited.

⁴⁵ Pittock, “Ramsay...,” in *ODNB*, as in n. 31 above.

⁴⁶ Angus McIntosh, “Codes and cultures,” in Margaret Laing and Keith Williamson, eds., *Speaking in our Tongues* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1994), 135-7 (135).

challenged textual criticism ever since, well beyond the “long eighteenth century” activities of Thomas Percy and Walter Scott on the one hand, or Thomas Tyrwhitt and Joseph Ritson on the other, that represent the most obvious inheritors of their approaches.⁴⁷ In this context, Roy Michael Liuzza’s comments are very much to the point:

It is true that an edition of a manuscript is no substitute for the manuscript itself—map is not territory, as they say—, but on the other hand territory isn’t map either; nor do modern readers have the same relationship to text and page that medieval readers or audiences might have had. An edition, like a map, is useful precisely *because* it is a model, a representation of a text and its history further, an analytical language for reducing artifact to information.⁴⁸

Maps, of course, as is widely known, are always ideological, and textual editors are increasingly aware that the editorial process is not—and never has been—“neutral” or “objective” but is rather a hermeneutic act constrained by contemporary conditions of publication and intended audience.⁴⁹ Such an awareness has led to textual critics such as Tim Machan “urging editorial and interpretive self-conscious” and “greater historical sensibility in an activity that is inherently historical.”⁵⁰ As we have seen, the editorial activities of Ramsay and Ruddiman—as much, incidentally, as modern editors—are constrained in quite delicate ways by their historical setting.

University of Glasgow

⁴⁷ See Smith, *Transforming*, *passim*.

⁴⁸ Roy Michael Liuzza, “Scribes of the mind: editing Old English, in theory and practice,” in Hugh Magennis and Jon Wilcox, eds, *The Power of Words: Anglo-Saxon Studies presented to Donald G. Scragg on his seventieth birthday* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2006), 245-277 (276). See also Machan, *Textual Criticism*, 72-3.

⁴⁹ Cf. Sue Wright, “The map, the group and language ideology,” *Journal of World Languages*, 1 (2014): 81-98.

⁵⁰ Machan, *Textual Criticism*, 193.